1-1-1992

An Evaluation of Educational Indicators In Illinois' New Illinois Accountability Law

Leon Francis Gobczynski

This research is a product of the graduate program in Educational Administration at Eastern Illinois University. Find out more about the program.

Recommended Citation
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/theses/2173

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Theses & Publications at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.
THESIS REPRODUCTION CERTIFICATE

TO: Graduate Degree Candidates who have written formal theses.

SUBJECT: Permission to reproduce theses.

The University Library is receiving a number of requests from other institutions asking permission to reproduce dissertations for inclusion in their library holdings. Although no copyright laws are involved, we feel that professional courtesy demands that permission be obtained from the author before we allow theses to be copied.

Please sign one of the following statements:

Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University has my permission to lend my thesis to a reputable college or university for the purpose of copying it for inclusion in that institution's library or research holdings.

Date

I respectfully request Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University not allow my thesis be reproduced because ____________________________

Date Author

m
An Evaluation of Educational Indicators
In Illinois' New Illinois Accountability Law

BY

Leon Francis Gobczynski

Field Experience
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
Specialist in Educational Administration
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1992

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS FIELD EXPERIENCE BE ACCEPTED AS
FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

07-22-92
Date
7-22-92
Date
Abstract

Purpose

In the fall of 1992, P.L. 87-559 will change the way schools and districts in Illinois are evaluated for the purpose of recognition. This is commonly known as Illinois' new accountability law. This law shifts recognition from solely legal compliance to include school performance and school improvement.

Five educational indicators were chosen for Illinois' new accountability law by the State Legislature in conjunction with the Illinois State Board of Education. This research study measured administrators perceptions about the five educational indicators used in Illinois' new accountability law. In addition, ten national educational indicators were selected and administrators were requested to rank their perceptions of the effectiveness of each. Subsequently, the five educational indicators from Illinois' new accountability law were combined with the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher and administrators were again asked for their perceptions in importance by rank. Finally, administrators were asked if they would change Illinois' new accountability law and, if so, how?

The research study focused on determining which
educational indicators administrators felt were most important by rank so that the Illinois General Assembly in conjunction with the Illinois State Board of Education might use the results to determine if Illinois' new accountability law is using the best possible educational indicators.

**Procedures**

State and national educational indicators were researched through the Administrator Opinion Questionnaire designed by the researcher. It was administered in East-Central Illinois to all 134 administrators in the Educational Service Center #15 area. The return rate of the survey was 64.2%. Descriptive statistics and the $t$-test were used to analyze the data.

**Results**

The results of the research study varied as to what educational indicators administrators felt should be included in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559). Most administrators felt that student performance is the best educational indicator for measuring the effectiveness of a school or district for the purpose of recognition. Student attendance and student graduation rate were judged moderately important educational indicators. Student retention rated poorly (fourth) and student expulsion ranked last (fifth) of all of the state educational indicators and national educational indicators rated.
Seven of the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher were ranked highly by administrators in East-Central Illinois (ESC #15) and might merit inclusion in Illinois' new accountability law. The highest ranking of the ten national educational indicators was teacher competency followed in order by critical thinking skills, funding equity, responsibility, honesty, community educational support, and workplace competency. Tolerance of ideas, preschool programs, and international awareness ranked poorest of the national educational indicators selected by the researcher.

The research study revealed administrators' perceptions on key factors about educational indicators and their effects on schools. The opinions expressed by administrators should serve as a basis of discussion about what national educational indicators might be included in Illinois' new accountability law.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere appreciation to my wife Rebecca for enduring the long hours of her career oriented husband and to my children (Andrew and Stephanie), friends, and peers for their encouragement and support in my pursuit of this study and my Educational Specialist degree.

Appreciation and thank you is also extended to Dr. David Bartz, my field experience supervisor, for his guidance, patience, and direction during the completion of this degree. Also, thanks to Dr. Larry Janes for research input and guidance during the completion of this degree and to Dr. Donald Smitley, Dr. Freddie Banks, and Dr. Beverly Findley for editorial assistance.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter I--Introduction To The Study</th>
<th>page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background Information</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of the Study</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions of Terms</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter II--Rationale and Illinois' Educational Indicators</th>
<th>page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related Literature</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois' Educational Indicators</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter III--Design of the Study</th>
<th>page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Design</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample and Population</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection and Instrumentation</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter IV--Results</th>
<th>page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results For Question 1</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results For Question 2</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter I
Introduction to the Study

Background Information

Since the School Reform Act of 1985, Illinois has extensively measured student performance in an attempt to be more accountable to the public regarding education. The School Report Card, Illinois Goals and Assessment Program, State Goals For Learning, Local District Learner Objectives, and School Improvement Plans are direct outcomes of the commitment by the Illinois General Assembly to respond to the growing criticism of education.

On September 17, 1991, Governor Edgar signed House Bill 0885 (P.L. 87-559) into law. This "Educational Accountability" law amended parts of Article 2 and 3 of the Illinois School Code. The entire text of P.L. 87-559 follows, with the new language underlined.

Sec. 2-3.25. Standards for schools. (a) To determine for all types of schools conducted under this Act efficient and adequate standards for the physical plant, heating, lighting, ventilation, sanitation, safety, equipment, and supplies, instruction and teaching, curriculum, library, operation, maintenance, administration and supervision, and to issue, refuse to issue or revoke certificates of recognition for schools or school districts pursuant to standards established hereunder; to determine and establish efficient and adequate standards for the approval of credit for courses given and conducted by schools outside of the regular school term.
(b) Whenever it appears that a secondary or unit school district may be unable to offer courses enabling students in grades 9 through 12 to meet the minimum preparation and admission requirements for public colleges and universities adopted by the Board of Higher Education, the State Board of Education shall assist the district in reviewing and analyzing its existing curriculum with particular reference to the educational needs of all pupils of the district and the sufficiency of existing and future revenues and payments available to the district for development of a curriculum which will provide maximum educational opportunity to pupils of the district. The review and analysis may consider achievement of this goal not only through implementation of traditional classroom methods but also through development of and participation in joint educational programs with other school districts or institutions of higher education, or alternative programs employing modern technological methods including but not limited to the use of television, telephones, computers, radio, and other electronic devices. (Source: P.A. 84-1115.)

Sec. 2-3.25a. Additional standards. In addition to the standards established pursuant to Section 2-3.25, the State Board of Education shall develop recognition standards for student performance and school improvement. The indicators to assess student performance and school improvement shall include but need not be limited to the State assessment of student performance, local assessment results, student attendance rates, retention rates, expulsion rates, and graduation rates. The standards shall be designed to permit a school district to measure student performance and school improvement by school buildings compared to student performance and school improvement for the preceding academic years.

Sec. 2-3.25b. Recognition levels. The State Board of Education shall, consistent with adopted recognition standards, provide for levels of recognition or nonrecognition. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules governing the procedures whereby school districts may appeal recognition level.

The State Board of Education shall have the authority to collect from school districts the information, data, test results, student performance and school improvement indicators as may be necessary to implement and carry out the purpose of this Act.
Sec. 2-3.25c. Rewards. The State Board of Education shall implement a system of rewards to recognize and reward schools whose students perform at high levels or which demonstrate outstanding improvement.

Sec. 2-3.25d. Academic watch list. Those schools that are not meeting the standards of academic performance and improvement as specified by the State Board of Education under the criteria set forth in Section 2-3.25a may be placed on an academic watch list established by the State Superintendent of Education and shall be subject to an on-site visitation to determine whether extenuating circumstances exist as to why school or schools should not be placed on an academic watch list by the State Superintendent of Education.

A school district that has one or more schools on the academic watch list shall submit a revised School Improvement Plan or amendments thereto setting forth the district's expectations for removing each school in the district from the academic watch list and for improving student performance in that school. Districts operating under Article 34 of the School Code may submit the School Improvement Plan required under Section 34-2.4. If any district submits a School Improvement Plan which exceeds 2 years in duration, the Plan shall contain provisions for evaluation and determination as to the improvement of student performance or school improvement after no later than 2 years. The revised School Improvement Plan or amendments thereto shall be developed in consultation with the staff of the affected school and must be approved by the local board of education and the school's local school council for districts operating under Article 34 of the School Code. Revised School Improvement Plans must be submitted for approval to the State Superintendent of Education pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education. The revised School Improvement Plan shall address specific, measurable outcomes for improving student performance so that such performance equals or exceeds standards set for the school by the State Board of Education.

A school or schools shall remain on the academic watch list for at least one full academic year. During each academic year for which a school is on the academic watch list, it shall continue to be evaluated and assessed by the State Board of Education as to whether it is meeting outcomes identified in its School Improvement Plan.
Sec. 2-3.25e. School improvement panel. A school district that has a school on the academic watch list after 2 years shall have a school improvement panel appointed by the State Superintendent of Education for each school on the watch list. Members appointed to the panel shall include, but not be limited to, individuals who are familiar with educational issues. The State Superintendent of Education shall designate one member of the panel to serve as chairman. Any panel appointed for a school operated under Article 3 of the School Code shall include one or more members selected from the school's subdistrict council and one or more members from the school's local school council. The school improvement panel shall (1) assist the school district in the development and implementation of a revised School Improvement Plan and amendments thereto, (2) make progress reports and comments to the State Superintendent of Education pursuant to rules promulgated by the State Board of Education, and (3) have authority to review and approve or disapprove all actions of the board of education that pertain to implementation of the revised School Improvement Plan. The revised School Improvement Plan must be developed in consultation with the staff of the affected school and approved by the appropriate board of education and for districts operated under Article 3 of the School Code the school's local school council. Following that approval, the plan shall be submitted to the State Superintendent of Education for approval.

Sec. 2-3.25f. State interventions. School districts that fail to submit required School Improvement Plans or fail to obtain approval of such plans pursuant to rules adopted by the State Board of Education may have State funds withheld until such plans are submitted. School districts that fail to make reasonable effort to implement an approved School Improvement Plan may suffer loss of State funds by school district, attendance center, or program as the State Board of Education deems appropriate. In addition, if after 4 years following its placement on the academic watch list a district or school remains on the academic watch list, the State Board of Education shall take one of the following actions:

1. The State Board of Education may authorize the State Superintendent of Education to direct the regional superintendent of schools to remove school board members pursuant to Section 3-14.28 of this Code. Prior to such direction, the State Board of Education shall permit members of the local board
of education to present written and oral comments to the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education may direct the State Superintendent of Education to appoint an Independent Authority that shall exercise such powers and duties as may be necessary to operate a school or school district for purposes of improving pupil performance and school improvement. The State Superintendent of Education shall designate one member of the Independent Authority to serve as chairman. The Independent Authority shall serve for a period of time specified by the State Board of Education upon the recommendation of the State Superintendent of Education; or

2. The State Board of Education (a) may nonrecognize the school district, or (b) may authorize the State Superintendent of Education to direct the reassignment of pupils and administrative staff. If a school district is nonrecognized in its entirety, it shall automatically be dissolved on July 1 following that nonrecognition and its territory realigned with another school district or districts by the regional board of school trustees in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 7-11 of the School Code. The effective date of the nonrecognition of a school shall be July 1 following the nonrecognition.

Sec. 2-3.25g. Waiver of administrative rules and regulations. In order to stimulate innovation where improved student performance is the goal, the State Superintendent of Education shall have authority to grant annual waivers of any administrative rule and regulation, or portion thereof, promulgated by the State Board of Education. Such waivers shall be limited to school improvement issues as defined by the State Board of Education and shall not conflict with existing statutory requirements. Waivers may not be granted from rules and regulations pertaining to special education or teacher certification.

School districts and any Independent Authority established under Section 2-3.25f may submit an application for a waiver authorized under this Section. Each application must include a written request by the school district or Independent Authority and must be based upon a specific plan for improved student performance and school improvement. Applications and plans must be developed in consultation with those educators directly involved in its implementation.
The school district or independent authority must notify in writing the affected exclusive collective bargaining agent of the district's exclusive collective bargaining agent of the district's authority's intent to seek approval of a waiver and of any meetings to be held with educators to discuss the waiver. The affected exclusive bargaining agents shall be allowed to attend such meetings.

A request for a waiver from administrative rules and regulations may be granted if the waiver is based upon sound educational practices, does not endanger the health and safety of students or staff, does not compromise equal opportunity for learning, and has improved student performance as a primary goal. An approved waiver may be renewed only upon evidence of enhanced student performance and school improvement.

Sec 2-3.25h. Technical assistance. School districts, local school councils, school improvement panels, and any Independent Authority established under Section 2-3.25f may receive technical assistance through the State Board of Education. Such technical assistance may include, but shall not be limited to, assistance in the areas of curriculum evaluation, the instructional process, student performance, school environment, staff effectiveness, school and community relations, parental involvement, resource management, and leadership.

Sec. 2-3.25i. Rules. The State Board of Education shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this amendatory Act of 1991. The State Board of Education may waive any of its rules or regulations which conflict with this amendatory Act except those requirements for special education and teacher certification.

Sec. 2-3.25j. Implementation. Commencing with the 1992-93 school year and thereafter the provisions of this amendatory Act and any rules adopted hereunder shall be implemented on a schedule identified by the State Board of Education and incorporated as an integral part of the recognition process of the State Board of Education.

Sec. 3-14.28. To remove any member of a school board from office upon the direction of the State Superintendent of Education pursuant to action of the State Board of Education authorized under Section 2.3.25f and to appoint individuals to fill vacancies thereby created within 30 days.

"
Section 2. This Act shall take effect upon becoming law.

This bill was supported by many organizations, including the Illinois Manufacturers Association, the Chamber of Commerce, the Illinois Education Association, and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). With such support, it unanimously passed the House of Representatives (114 yeas and 0 nays), and the Senate (55 yeas and 0 nays). The crux of the bill is that individual schools or districts will be evaluated for the purpose of recognition based on how well they educate or improving their educational product in the form of student educational indicators. Incentives will be provided in terms of money, less frequent monitoring, and flexibility for those schools that meet or exceed state standards. Poor performance will trigger intervention by the state such as more frequent monitoring, technical assistance, being placed on the academic watch list, and possible replacement of school board members.

The following five performance based educational indicators have been selected as the basis of the ISBE judgments: (a) student performance, (b) student attendance, (c) student retention rate, (d) student expulsion rate, and (e) student graduation rate (ISBE, 1991). All Illinois schools will be evaluated using these state educational indicators.
National educational indicators have been identified by the United States Department of Education that possibly could serve to improve Illinois' new accountability model. These national educational indicators are identifiable and measurable, although not as easily as the five state educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law.

Statement of the Problem

The way in which schools will be accredited for the purpose of recognition by the Illinois State Board of Education has changed. On September 17, 1991, House Bill 0885 became law (P.L. 87-559) thereby modifying the mechanism that the ISBE uses to evaluate schools for the purpose of recognition. This change places specific responsibilities on local schools and districts. Accountability will, more than ever, be at the local level.

A new type of recognition system has perhaps been long overdue in Illinois. However, school districts, school buildings, administrators, teachers, school board members, students, and communities are likely to be significantly affected by any change in the current process. If Illinois is going to modify the recognition process, the most effective educational indicators should be used and should have credibility with administrators.

Limitations of the Study

1. The focus of this study was 25 schools and 13 administrators in East-Central Illinois (ESC #15). The
extent to which results can be generalized to other districts is related to the similarity of such districts in comparison to the districts studied.

2. No differentiation was made between public and parochial schools; high schools, junior high schools or middle schools; or primary and intermediate schools.

3. No differentiation was made concerning age, gender, or position of the administrators in the study.

4. No differentiation was made between rural or municipal schools.

Definitions of Terms

academic watch list - a list compiled by the ISBE for the purpose of determining compliance with the accountability law.

new accountability law - refers to Illinois House Bill 0885.


educational indicators - outcomes of education.
Chapter II

Related Literature, Rationale, And Illinois' Five Educational Indicators

Introduction

Schools and districts in Illinois will be evaluated for the purpose of recognition by the ISBE under Illinois' new accountability law in 1992-93. Five educational indicators were selected for Illinois' new accountability law and these will be the same for all school districts in Illinois, in spite of variation in districts. Further, the ISBE has developed only student performance based indicators, while schools address many other educational indicators. Schools are different on factors such as: amount spent to educate a student, demographics, socio-economic factors, and community involvement. If responsibility lies at the local level, perhaps an accountability model should be "custom made" for each school or district.

It is the researcher's opinion that most school district officials agree with the need for including student performance based educational indicators as a component of any accountability model. This research study assessed administrators' perceptions about the need for additional educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law and their importance.
A Nation at Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) helped propel education to the top of the nation's agenda. One year later the Secretary of Education unveiled the initiation of an annual "Wall Chart" with educational indicators which compared states on dimensions such as SAT and ACT scores, graduation rates, teachers' salaries, pupil-teacher ratios, expenditure per student, and characteristics of the student population. The chart was greeted with headlines throughout the country, and with the charge that it was unfair because it used inappropriate measures for comparison purposes.

The conclusions of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, and the indicators presented annually in the "Wall Chart," have forced educators, policy makers, and citizens to ask difficult questions such as:

1. How well are students doing?
2. How do students compare with students from other countries or states?
3. How well qualified are our teachers?
4. How much are we spending and what are we receiving in return?
5. What is being taught and how is it taught?
6. How many students complete high school and college and what occupations do they get?

7. What differences exist among expenditures, exposure to subject matter, levels of achievement and what can we do about them (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1991, p. 11)?

President Bush and Secretary of Education, Alexander, met in April, 1991, to announce America 2000. This was a new education strategy which signified the importance of raising the level of student achievement. The educational goals of America 2000 educational were:

1. All children in America will start school ready to learn.

2. The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

3. American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography (and leave school) prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern world.

4. U.S. students will be first in the world in science and math achievement.

5. Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a
global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

6. Every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning. (United States Department of Education, 1991, p. 3)

On the state level, Governor Edgar has unveiled "Illinois 2000," an eight point plan to push Illinois' students on top of the education world. These eight points are:

1. Each student should demonstrate problem solving skills and be prepared to succeed in a diverse and global society and global work force.

2. All Illinoisans will be literate, lifelong learners.

3. Each school will have an accountability process that includes rewards, interventions, and assistance for schools.

4. Schools will have highly qualified professionals who will ensure high levels of learning.

5. Schools will effectively use technology to support learning and improve operational efficiency.

6. All schools will develop community support to ensure students' success.

7. Illinois public schools will be supported by an adequate, equitable, stable and predictable finance system.
8. Children will enter school ready to learn (Rivara, 1992, p. A2).

In the researchers opinion, the resemblance in the two proposals seems more than coincidental since Illinois is the thirty-third state to offer a plan tailored after a similar plan of President Bush.

A number of national groups have been working toward identifying and measuring educational indicators or outcomes. The National Education Goals Panel, the Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and the Council of Chief State School Officers are just a few of the national organizations measuring educational indicators. Literature is produced by these organizations and millions of dollars are spent measuring educational indicators that give the nation a look at the quality of education being produced.

The following are a number of related developments as delineated by the National Center for Educational Statistics (1991).

1. Internationally, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) plans to report education indicators for 20 countries in 1991. The International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) has been measuring student achievement for two decades and provides rich
comparative data.

2. At the federal level, several longstanding efforts can be drawn on. NCES publishes the report, "The Condition of Education," which provides national data on nearly 50 indicators of elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education. The Department of Education's Wall Chart annually compares states on a variety of measures. The National Science Foundation is developing a biennial Science Education Indicators effort.

3. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has initiated an effort to develop "fair and constructive" comparisons among states on characteristics such as demographics and resources, policies and practices, instructional time, student needs, and reform efforts.

4. The National Governors' Association (NGA) uses indicators to monitor states' progress toward reform goals adopted by NGA in 1986 and reports its findings in an annual report, "Results in Education."

5. Many states have launched indicator efforts of their own.

6. Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE), an independent research center supported by three universities (Berkeley, Stanford, and Southern
California), issues an annual "Conditions of Education" report on statewide education trends.

7. Several business organizations including the Business-Higher Education Forum, the Business Roundtable, the Committee for Economic Development, and the National Alliance of Business have begun to track education developments of interest to their constituents (National Center for Education Statistics, 1991, p. 14).

Despite these aforementioned efforts, no precise way exists to measure all educational indicators that impact education.

In 1990 the Learning Research and Development Center and the National Center on Education and the Economy suggested the development of a sophisticated new national examination system that emphasizes alternative assessment techniques. The Learning Research and Development Center (1990) found the following:

When fully developed, the National Examination System would include three forms of examination: performance examinations, portfolios, and projects. Students would sit for timed performance examinations, which would ask them to demonstrate that they have mastered the curriculum on which the examinations were based. Though these examinations might include some multiple choice questions, they would also require self-generated and more elaborate responses. Portfolios
would be assembled from work that a student did over a period of months or years, documenting the capacity to create a number of different work products and select the best of them. Projects would be used to give students opportunities to demonstrate their capacity to apply what they know in the context of solving a complex problem over a period of time, often in association with other students. All of these models of assessment would stress the application of knowledge and skill in real life situations, situations in which there is rarely only one right answer to a problem and in which much of the art of solving the problem lies in framing it well. This combination of modes of assessment is designed to accommodate a variety of styles of learning and of demonstrating competence. These demonstrations of competence could occur over a period of years so that students need not feel that everything depends on what they do in a day or two of high pressure examination. They can begin to take pride, instead, in a record of cumulative achievement (Learning Research and Development Center, 1990, p.1).

Rationale

Many ideas presented in the literature were helpful in formulating ideas about this research study. The traditional system model of inputs--process--outcomes was analyzed. In the researcher's opinion, Illinois' new
accountability law is looking at the educational outcomes part of the model, specifically the narrow field of student performance based educational indicators within the educational outcomes part of the model.

In this researcher's opinion, the public's understanding of education must be improved by the use of reliable, high quality educational indicators if the educational process is to be enriched. The use of student performance based indicators is not to be discounted in importance. However, schools address more issues than student performance and these aspects must be taken into account when evaluating a school or district for the purpose of recognition.

Data were gathered by a panel charged by the United States Department of Education in July, 1989, for the purpose of delivering information about what educational indicators the nation should employ. This panel was given authority to do this under the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100-297). Criteria about what educational indicators should contain were in three parts: (National Center for Educational Statistics)

1. Indicator information must focus first on what matters most about learning and about schools and colleges. This is a kind of "bottom line" assessment
that most members of the public expect. The panel believes the nation needs to create a system with a dual focus on both learner outcomes and the quality of the nation's educating institutions. A truly effective indicator system must forcefully and fully address student learning and examine the quality of the nation's schools and colleges.

2. Indicator information must assess the social context within which education takes place. In most immediate terms, we need a much better understanding of the conditions of families with young children, and of the children's readiness to learn as they enter the formal educational system. In more general terms, we need to know about societal support for learning. These two topics can be thought of as "leading indicators" that scan the educational environment. If the public is to understand not only educational performance but also the environment in which schools and colleges pursue their mission, it is essential that we have a better understanding of these issues.

3. Indicator information must reflect important national values and aspirations for education. Information about students, schools, colleges, and community support is important. But larger national values and aspirations lie beyond individual classrooms, lecture halls, and the immediate
community. These include educational equity and the contributions that education makes to the nation's well-being, particularly to its economic productivity. A valid and reliable education system must respond to these concerns (National Center for Education Statistics, 1991, p. 23).

These educational indicators are not intended to be the answer for all education outcomes, but seen as a beginning point for discussion.

**Illinois Educational Indicators**

The 1985 reform legislation shifted educational indicators to focus on outcome based student learning. The basic elements of this legislation provided the necessary structure for the new accountability law. Many ways were established to assess student performance as a result of the 1985 reform legislation. The most notable examples were:

1. State Goals for Learning
2. Illinois Goal Assessment Program
3. State Report Cards
4. School Improvement Plans
5. Local Learner Assessment Plans


The ISBE and Illinois' new accountability law have established certain basic educational beliefs:
1. All children can learn.
2. All children must be served.
3. The primary purpose of the school improvement process is to improve student performance.
4. A school is an observably dynamic place where all involved can and should improve.
5. High expectations are necessary to achieve a world class education.
6. A school is more effective when its purpose or mission is collectively determined and clearly communicated by the board, staff, and community.
7. The school building must be the level of accountability.
8. The state will account for diversity.
9. When a school building is exceeding expectations the state should provide recognition.
10. When the school is not meeting expectations, the state has the authority to intervene (L. Janes, personal communication, September 7, 1991).

Starting with the 1992-93 school year, all schools in Illinois must use Illinois' new accountability model for the purpose of gaining recognition through the ISBE. This new system developed by the Regulatory Process Committee and presented in the ISBE's film Nurturing Excellence, asks two basic questions:
1. To what extent are students learning?

2. To what extent are all students being served (Illinois State Board of Education Regulatory Process Committee, 1991)?

School boards, administrators, teachers, and community members will be responsible for delivering world class education to all Illinois' students. The ISBE stands ready to help with rewards for those schools who meet or exceed state standards and to intervene should a school fail to measure up over a period of time. Intervention will entail the following steps:

1. If a school has a history of poor performance in relation to established standards, it will be placed on the academic watch list.

2. If after two years the targets have not been met, the ISBE will appoint a form of administrative oversight which would be empowered with the necessary resources and authority to make changes within the building and school district.

3. If after four years of being put on the academic watch list, targets have not been met, the ISBE will arrange for the operation of the school and/or the placement of students in the best interest of children until state standards are met (R. Haney, personal communication, October 21, 1991).
This new law will require local districts to report to the public on the following:

1. Student performance
2. Level of improvement
3. Plans for improvement
4. A need to revise the school report card
5. A need to review the plan and synchronize time lines (R. Shaljo, personal communication, October 7, 1991).

The process has been described as not equal, but equitable, by Dr. Schaljo of the ISBE. The following five areas of student performance based indicators will be used in the new plan:

1. Student performance
2. Student attendance rate
3. Student retention rate
4. Student expulsion rate
5. Student graduation rate

According to Dr. Schaljo, another indicator will be added in the near future in the area of post-graduate placement. The following four subheadings will be under this indicator: (a) employment, (b) higher education, (c) military, and (d) unemployment.

The usefulness of an educational indicator is enhanced over time by what it can measure about the performance of a school measured against itself and/or other school districts, or how it measures the community's needs and
expectations. Thus, an educational indicator is a group of statistics used to measure values for review and analysis. This may lead to change in policy and practice.

In the researcher's opinion, the essential purpose of education indicator systems is to assess direction, mission, and strategy. For state officials, this means reviewing and analyzing the goals and objectives of the state's education system and determining whether these goals and objectives are being met. Assessing whether goals and objectives are being met is increasingly necessary as state leaders and citizens have become more outspoken about what schooling should achieve and have acted to impress their views on schools.

This researcher feels that the yield of the educational indicator system should help state leaders set policy for education. An educational indicator system, in effect, is a device for setting organizational direction, by reconciling aims with actions and making adjustments in response to effects and revealed relationships among effects, school treatments, and contextual variables.

Kagan found the following:

Accepting this essential purpose means that the individuals creating the educational indicator system are responsible for making the measures within it congruent with the policy aims being pursued. It bespeaks top management's responsibility for setting
direction and assessing whether it is being pursued. It implies that the state, while designing an accountability system, should be accountable itself for making the critical link between what is assessed and what schools are supposed to be doing (Kagan, 1990, p. 55).
Chapter III
Design of The Study

General Design

The general design of the study was developed in four parts. Part I determined administrator opinions as to the importance of the five educational indicators and their effectiveness in Illinois' new accountability law. Part II identified how the administrators rank the importance of 10 national educational indicators selected by the researcher. Part III asked the administrators to rank the five educational indicators used in Illinois' new accountability law and the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher in order of importance. Part IV asked the administrators whether they felt the new accountability law should be modified and, if so, how? Responses were compiled by general categories.

Research Questions

The following six research study questions were investigated:

1. What are administrators' rating of the importance for the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559)?

2. What is the ranking of importance for the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher?
3. Is there a significant difference between the importance given to the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law by Illinois ESC #15 administrators' and the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher as a group?

4. What is the ranking of importance by Illinois ESC #15 administrators' for the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law and the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher combined?

5. What percent of administrators in East-Central Illinois (ESC #15) believe that Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559) should be modified?

6. For those administrators who believe that Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559) should be modified, what changes do they advocate?

Sample and Population

One hundred thirty-four administrators representing twenty-five school districts in East-Central Illinois were requested to complete the Administrator Opinion Questionnaire which included all administrators and schools within the ESC #15. The sample surveyed included schools in the Illinois counties of: Cumberland, Coles, Fayette, Clark, Edgar, Bond, Effingham, Moultrie, and Shelby.

One hundred thirty-four surveys were mailed to administrators on January 10, 1992, with a January 24, 1992, deadline for participants to return their surveys. A second
mailing on January 27, 1992, was made to those administrators who did not respond to the first mailing with a February 7, 1992, deadline to insure an optimum response.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

The cover letter explained the purpose of the survey and promised aggregate data in return for the cooperation of the respondents. The schools surveyed were in the same geographical area and were agriculturally influenced. These administrators were chosen for the following reasons:

1. The districts and administrators were familiar to the author, thus enhancing the chance for input.

2. The districts and the populations are similar, thus adding to the reliability of the information.

3. Agriculturally influenced districts face unique problems based on farmland assessment and other factors.

4. Population displacement due to economic conditions has been particularly difficult on schools in this area.

5. Administrators in ESC #15 were in-serviced on Illinois' new accountability law in the fall of 1991 by ESC #15.

Data Analysis

For the most part, descriptive statistics were used to report the results. A t-test was used to compare the mean of the means (Table C) for the five criteria in Illinois' new accountability law and the mean of means for the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher.
Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

The six research study questions investigated were:

1. What are administrators' ratings of the importance for the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L.87-559)?

2. What is the ranking of importance for the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher?

3. Is there a significant difference between the importance given to the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law by Illinois ESC #15 administrators' as a group and the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher as a group?

4. What is the ranking of importance by Illinois ESC #15 administrators for the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law and the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher combined?

5. What percentage of administrators in East-Central Illinois (ESC #15) believe that Illinois' new accountability law (P.L.87-559) should be modified?

6. For those administrators who believe that the new accountability law (P.L. 87-559) should be modified, what changes do they advocate?
The format of this chapter presents the results for the research questions separately.

**Results For Question 1--What are administrators' ratings of the importance for the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559)?**

Table A presents data for addressing Question 1.

**Table A**

**Means For The Five Educational Indicators In Illinois' New Accountability Law (P.L. 87-559)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Performance</td>
<td>1.442</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Attendance</td>
<td>2.279</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Graduation Rate</td>
<td>2.419</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Retention Rate</td>
<td>3.430</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Expulsion Rate</td>
<td>4.186</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean of the Five Means = 2.751

The rating scale used designated "1" for the highest or most important rating and "5" for the lowest or least important value. Each of the five educational indicators were ranked on this five point scale. It is important to note that the educational indicator with the lowest mean rating in Table A is the most important.
Student performance was ranked first with a mean of 1.442. Student attendance finished slightly ahead (second) of student graduation rate (third) with a mean of 2.279 compared to a mean of 2.419. Student retention rate finished fourth with a mean of 3.430. Student expulsion rate was ranked last (fifth) with a mean of 4.186.

Conclusions. Student performance was the highest ranking educational indicator in Illinois' new accountability law. The general consensus of administrators is that this is the best educational indicator offered in Illinois' new accountability law. Student attendance and student graduation rate are closely ranked and appear to be useful for measuring the effectiveness of schools or districts for the purpose of recognition by administrators. Student retention rate with a mean of 3.430 and student expulsion rate with a mean of 4.186 are ranked as the poorest choices offered by Illinois' new accountability law and perhaps need to be reevaluated as to whether their inclusion in Illinois' new accountability law is merited.

Results For Question 2--What is the ranking of importance for the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher?

Table B presents data for addressing Question 2.

Table B

Means For The Ten National Educational Indicators Selected
By The Researcher
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Indicators</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Competency</td>
<td>1.570</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Equity</td>
<td>1.694</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>1.826</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>1.837</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>1.872</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Educational Support</td>
<td>2.105</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Competency</td>
<td>2.128</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance of Ideas</td>
<td>2.337</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Programs</td>
<td>2.430</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Awareness</td>
<td>2.884</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean of the Ten Means = 2.0683

Respondents rated the importance of the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher and not listed in Illinois' new accountability law using "1" for the highest possible or most important value and "5" for the lowest possible or least important value. Specifically, each of the ten national educational indicators were ranked on this five point scale. It is important to note that the educational indicator with the lowest mean rating in Table B was deemed to be the most important.
Teacher competency ranked first of the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher with a mean of 1.570. Funding equity and responsibility were second and third with means of 1.694 and 1.826 respectively. Honesty and critical thinking skills followed closely in fourth and fifth places with means of 1.837 and 1.872. Community educational support (2.105), workplace competency (2.128), and tolerance of ideas (2.337) followed in the seventh, eighth, and ninth positions. The weakest national educational indicator according to the sample group was International Awareness with a mean of 2.884.

Conclusions. The mean rating of the ten national educational indicators warrants a closer look. The only criterion that was below the mean of means in Table A (2.7512) was International Awareness with a mean of 2.884. Every other national educational indicator was ranked higher based on the mean, than the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law with teacher competency, funding equity, responsibility, and honesty being preferred by administrators.

Results For Question 3--Is there a significant difference between the importance given to the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law by Illinois ESC #15 administrators' and the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher as a group?

Table C presents data for addressing Question 4.
Table C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Accountability Law</td>
<td>1.8387</td>
<td>.10 (two-tailed test)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= 2.7512</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Educational</td>
<td>2.0683</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators = 2.0683</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The t-test shows that the mean of Illinois' new accountability law is significantly different at the .10 level when compared to the mean of the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher. In essence, this result could only have occurred ten times out of one hundred by chance. Therefore, based on utilizing the .10 level, it is concluded that these two means do differ significantly.

Conclusions. A review of educational indicators currently employed in Illinois' new accountability law needs to be done to assure that the best possible educational indicators can be used when evaluating the effectiveness of school and districts for the purpose of recognition.
Results For Question 4—What is the ranking of importance by Illinois ESC #15 administrators for the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law and the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher combined?

Table D presents data for addressing Question 4.

Table D

Ranking of The Means (Importance) When The Five Criteria From Illinois' New Accountability Law (P.L. 87-559) And The Ten National Educational Indicators Selected By The Researcher Are Combined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Student Performance</td>
<td>3.221</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Competency</td>
<td>4.453</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>5.930</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Equity</td>
<td>6.221</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>6.547</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>6.837</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Student Attendance</td>
<td>6.884</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Educational Support</td>
<td>6.977</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Competency</td>
<td>7.372</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Student Graduation Rate</td>
<td>8.291</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance of Ideas</td>
<td>9.384</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Programs</td>
<td>9.651</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Indicator</td>
<td>Mean Rating</td>
<td>Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Retention Rate</td>
<td>11.907</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Awareness</td>
<td>11.907</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Expulsion</td>
<td>14.105</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Illinois' New Accountability Law Educational Indicators

The five educational indicators used in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559) were combined with ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher and were presented in the Administrator Opinion Questionnaire through random selection. Administrators were requested to rank order the fifteen educational indicators from 1 to 15 utilizing 1 for the highest possible or most important value and 15 for the lowest or least important value. Specifically, each of the fifteen educational indicators were ranked on a five point scale. It is important to note that the educational indicator with the lowest mean rating in Table D was deemed to be the most important.

The five educational indicators used in Illinois' new accountability law ranked 1, 7, 10, 13, and 15. Student performance was judged to be the highest ranking educational indicator that administrators felt best measured the effectiveness of schools or districts for the purpose of
recognition. Student expulsion ranked weakest of all educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law rated with a mean of 14.105. Teacher competency was ranked second of all educational indicators rated with a mean of 4.453 and was also the highest of the ten national educational indicator selected by the researcher.

Conclusions. Administrators have shown that they favor student performance as the best educational indicator when evaluating the effectiveness of a school or district for the purpose of recognition. Five other national educational indicators selected by the researcher were favored before another of the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law was listed. Other educational indicators in addition to those currently being used in Illinois' new accountability law might possibly be considered for inclusion in any accountability model.

Results For Question 5—What percentage of administrators in East-Central Illinois (ESC #15) believe Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559) should be modified?

Table E presents data for addressing Question 5.

Table E

Percentage of Administrators Who Believe Illinois' New Accountability Law (P.L. 87-559) Should Be Modified
The yes responses were 41.9% as compared to 33.7% no. The administrators not responding to the question totaled 24.4%, which represents a large number. Their failure to respond may have been prompted by a lack of understanding as to what information was really being requested, or it may be due to the fact that administrators are waiting to make a judgment until Illinois' new accountability law impacts their school or district. In essence, they may be taking a "wait and see" attitude.

Conclusions. There seems to be two completely separate groups on this question. One group of administrators seems to favor a review of the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law before the evaluation process has time to evolve. The other group seems to favor a "wait" and see attitude and make decisions later when it is evident that Illinois' new accountability law is either sufficiently measuring the effectiveness of schools or districts, or whether change is needed in the evaluation process.
Results For Question 6--For those administrators who believe that Illinois' new accountability law should be modified, what changes do they advocate?

Table F presents data addressing Question 6.

Table F

Modifications Suggested By Administrators In East-Central Illinois (ESC #15) To Illinois' New Accountability Law (P.L. 87-559)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change state educational indicators</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequity in state funding</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student home life affecting learning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate success should be added</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local factors should be considered more</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators should have more input</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions.

The overwhelming response given by administrators favoring modifications in Illinois' new accountability law was to change the educational indicators as they now exist. Thus, other concerns, equity in funding and student home life affecting learning, tied for second place among administrators.
Chapter V

Summary and Recommendations

Summary

This research study did a review of the literature in the field of educational indicators from a state and national viewpoint. An Administrator Opinion Questionnaire was created by the researcher to evaluate administrator perceptions on Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559) and ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher. This research study was given to all administrators in East-Central Illinois (ESC #15) to which 64.2% responded.

The research study investigated six questions in an attempt to determine if administrators felt Illinois' new accountability law was using the best five educational indicators available in evaluating the effectiveness of schools or districts for the purpose of recognition. Since Illinois' new accountability law is likely to have a tremendous effect on administrators, teachers, parents, school board members and communities, it is imperative to use the best possible educational indicators.
The research study was conducted in four parts. Part I examined the perceptions of administrators about the five educational indicators used in Illinois' new accountability law. This information determined the rank of importance for the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law that administrators felt measured the effectiveness of their schools or districts. It is important to note that once this rank order was established in Part I, it remained constant when measured against national educational indicators.

Part II of the Administrator Opinion Questionnaire (AOQ) asked administrators to rank ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher. These ten national educational indicators were not selected for inclusion in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559), yet reflect what schools or districts are teaching and may be harder to measure.

Part III of the research study asked that administrators rank the order of importance of fifteen educational indicators combining the five educational indicators used in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559) and the ten national educational indicators selected by the researcher. These fifteen educational indicators were randomly selected and listed on the same page of the study for objectivity of selection.
Part IV of the research study asked whether administrators felt the new accountability law should be modified and, if so, how? The results showed that 41.9% felt that the new accountability law should be modified, 33.7% felt that it did not need revision, and 24.4% did not respond to the question.

Student performance is rated as the number one educational indicator that administrators felt should be used in measuring the effectiveness of schools for the purpose of recognition. Student attendance rate and student graduation rate are seen by administrators as adequate educational indicators when measuring the effectiveness of their schools or districts. Administrators have a serious problem with student retention and student expulsion rates being used to measure the effectiveness of their schools. This may be because of the potential for manipulation or perhaps other factors that impact the educational process outside the school. Whatever the cause, it seems clear through this study that these two educational indicators are not as valuable as others that exist.

Ten national educational indicators were selected by the researcher to see what administrators' perceptions towards them might be in measuring school or district effectiveness. Several national educational indicators were thought by the administrators to be equal or better than
those educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law based on the mean. Teacher competency was rated first of the ten national educational indicators selected for comparison. Funding equity and responsibility were the second and third national educational indicators rated. Honesty and critical thinking skills also rated highly.

When the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law were combined with the ten national educational indicators, the rankings on five of the ten national educational indicators were higher than four of the educational indicators used in Illinois' new accountability law. This would indicate that serious consideration might be made for inclusion of these national educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law model.

The reasons listed by administrators who favored a modification to Illinois' new accountability model provided insight into Illinois' educational system. There appears to be frustration by administrators concerning funding equity. Administrators are also apprehensive that they will not be evaluated against themselves, but with other schools and districts, in much the same way that school report cards currently are, complete with newspaper coverage. Student expulsion rate is another educational indicator that many administrators feel could be manipulated into showing that a particular school or district was more effective than indicated.
really was. Many factors outside of the school system are impacting the readiness of students' ability to learn and need to be taken into account when evaluating a school or district for the purpose of recognition.

One particularly interesting note was the fact that preschool programs rated twelfth of the fifteen educational indicators utilized. This indicates that administrators feel that many other areas in schools and districts need priority, yet this is one of the few areas of the Illinois State Budget that has received an increase in funding for the next school year.

Recommendations

Based upon the results of this research study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Conduct a statewide needs assessment to determine whether a revision in Illinois' new accountability law is merited.

2. Provide more opportunity for input from educators before establishing educational indicators for which those same educators will be responsible.

3. Investigate national educational indicators to see if their inclusion in Illinois' new accountability model is merited.

4. Develop local educational indicators for evaluating schools or districts for the purpose of recognition with local learner objectives.
5. This research study should be made available to the Illinois State Board of Education and any other group or individual that requests it.

6. Three of the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law should be retained. These educational indicators are student performance, student attendance and student graduation rate. Student expulsion and student retention should be replaced with some of the ten national educational indicators identified by the researcher. Teacher competency, critical thinking skills, funding equity, responsibility, and honesty were selected the best choices.
References

Committee of the National Academy of Education (1987).  
Commentary on the nation’s report card: Improving the  
assessment of student achievement. Report of a Study  
Group of the National Academy of Education: Washington,  

education goals? NEA Today, p. 3

Illinois State Board of Education (1986). The education  
State Board of Education.

Illinois State Board of Education Regulatory Process  
Committee (1991). Nurturing excellence [Film].  
Springfield, IL: Illinois State Board of Education.

action. National Association of Secondary School  
Principals, 9, 54-65

Learning Research and Development Center (1990). Setting a  
standard: Toward an examination system for the United  
Printing Office.

Education counts: Report of the special study panel on  
education indicators to the acting commissioner of


Dear Sir/Madam:

We are conducting a research project in conjunction with Eastern Illinois University on the use of performance based educational indicators in the Illinois' new accountability law (P.L.87-559) passed by the Illinois General Assembly and supported by the ISBE. The purpose of the study is to see if other educational indicators merit inclusion in any accountability model which is used to evaluate the effectiveness of schools.

Please find enclosed a questionnaire which we are using to collect data for this research.

A timely response to the survey will be greatly appreciated as we want to have all questionnaires returned by January 24, 1992. We have enclosed a stamped, self-addressed return envelope to facilitate the return of your response.

A response from you will guarantee a report of aggregate data back to you for application and discussion, once the research has been completed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Leon F. Gobczynski at Cumberland Elementary and Junior High School, (217) 923-3135. Your cooperation in this research will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Leon F. Gobczynski
Cumberland Elementary and Junior High School
R.R. 1, Box 182
Toledo, IL 62468

Dr. David Bartz
Professor of Educational Administration
Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, IL 61920

LFG
enclosures
Appendix B
Administrator Opinion Questionnaire

PLEASE RETURN by January 24, 1992, to: Leon F. Gobczynski
Principal
Cumberland Elementary
R.R. 1, Box 182
Toledo, IL 62468

NAME__________________________

SCHOOL________________________

ADDRESS________________________

Position (Please check) ___Superintendent, ___High School Principal, ___Middle or Junior High Principal,
___Elementary Principal

Part I - Your perceptions of the five educational indicators in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L.87-559).

Please rank the importance of the following educational indicators with respect to being used to evaluate the effectiveness of your school or district. Rate the educational indicators with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest value.

1. student performance 1 2 3 4 5
2. student attendance 1 2 3 4 5
3. student retention rate 1 2 3 4 5
4. student expulsion rate 1 2 3 4 5
5. student graduation rate 1 2 3 4 5

Part II - Your perceptions of ten national educational indicators.

Listed below are ten national educational indicators used to evaluate schools and school districts which are not included in Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559). Please rank the importance of the following educational indicators, with 1 being the highest and 5 being the lowest value.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Critical Thinking Skills</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workplace Competency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Awareness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tolerance of Ideas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher Competency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preschool Programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Educational Support</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funding Equity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part III - Your rank order of the importance for the following educational indicators.

Please rank order the following educational indicators 1 through 15. Use 1 for the highest ranking and 15 the lowest ranking. (Note that all educational indicators are to be used and all must reflect a different value.)

- international awareness
- student expulsion
- responsibility
- teacher competency
- preschool programs
- critical thinking skills
- workplace competency
- student performance
- funding equity
- student graduation rate
- student retention rate
- student attendance
Part IV

Do you believe Illinois' new accountability law (P.L. 87-559) should be modified? ___yes, ___no (if yes, how should it be changed?)

___ tolerance of ideas
___ honesty
___ community educational support
Table A

Means For The Five Educational Indicators In Illinois' New Accountability Law (P.L.87-559).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Performance</td>
<td>1.442</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Attendance</td>
<td>2.279</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Graduation Rate</td>
<td>2.419</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Retention Rate</td>
<td>3.430</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Expulsion Rate</td>
<td>4.186</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean of the Five Means = 2.751
Table B

Means For The Ten National Educational Indicators Selected By The Researcher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Competency</td>
<td>1.570</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Equity</td>
<td>1.694</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>1.826</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>1.837</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>1.872</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Educational Support</td>
<td>2.105</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Competency</td>
<td>2.128</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance of Ideas</td>
<td>2.337</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Programs</td>
<td>2.430</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Awareness</td>
<td>2.884</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean of the Ten Means = 2.068
Table C

`t-Test Results For The Comparison of The Mean of The Means For The Five Educational Indicators in Illinois' New Accountability Law (P.L. 87-559) And The Mean of The Means For The Ten National Educational Indicators Selected By The Researcher`

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Accountability Law = 2.751</td>
<td>1.838</td>
<td>.10 (two-tailed test)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationally Selected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Indicators = 2.068</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table D

Ranking of The Means When The Five Educational Indicators From Illinois' New Accountability Law (P.L.87-559) And The Ten National Educational Indicators Selected By The Researcher Are Combined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Indicator</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Student Performance</td>
<td>3.221</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Competency</td>
<td>4.453</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>5.930</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Equity</td>
<td>6.221</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>6.547</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>6.837</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Student Attendance</td>
<td>6.884</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Educational Support</td>
<td>6.977</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Competency</td>
<td>7.372</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Student Graduation Rate</td>
<td>8.291</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance of Ideas</td>
<td>9.384</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool Programs</td>
<td>9.651</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Student Retention Rate</td>
<td>11.907</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Awareness</td>
<td>11.942</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Student Expulsion</td>
<td>14.105</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Illinois' New Accountability Law Educational Indicators
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table F

Modifications Suggested By Administrators To Illinois' New Accountability Law (P.L.87-559)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change state educational indicators</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequity in state funding</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student home life affecting learning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate success should be added</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local factors should be considered more</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators should have more input</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>